

# **Cruel to be Kind**

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## **Cruel to be Kind** by **chattrekisses**

**Category:** IT (2017), IT - Stephen King

**Genre:** But it's okay and it's only really minor, Dare, First Kiss, Fluff, Fluff and Angst, Fluff and Humor, Idiots in Love, Internalized Homophobia, Kissing, Love, Love Confessions, M/M, Rough Kissing, Tooth-Rotting Fluff, Truth or Dare

**Language:** English

**Characters:** Ben Hanscom, Beverly Marsh, Bill Denbrough, Eddie Kaspbrak, Mike Hanlon, Richie Tozier, The Losers Club (IT)

**Relationships:** Ben Hanscom/Beverly Marsh, Eddie Kaspbrak/Richie Tozier

**Status:** Completed

**Published:** 2017-10-17

**Updated:** 2017-10-17

**Packaged:** 2020-01-26 19:16:13

**Rating:** Teen And Up Audiences

**Warnings:** No Archive Warnings Apply

**Chapters:** 1

**Words:** 2,344

**Publisher:** archiveofourown.org

**Summary:**

Richie is dared to kiss Eddie.

It's only weird because they're both in love with each other.

## Cruel to be Kind

### Author's Note:

So, the IT movie. Am I surprised that I love it? Nope.  
Is this oneshot a blessing?

You tell me, man.

You tell me.

"Richie... Richie, don't you fucking dare," Eddie protested weakly, feeling the column of his spine press uncomfortably against the base of the tree behind him, his finger threading through the dirt in an attempt to find purchase.

Richie pushed up his thick glasses with the hand that wasn't supporting him above Eddie's form. "Oh, come on, Eds. I promise I don't have cooties," His breath ghosted across Eddie's face. He smelled like warm milk. "Unless I caught something from your mom."

"Shut up, Trashmouth," Eddie mumbled, feeling his heart flip at Richie's proximity. "And don't call me that."

"You can't fool me, I know you love it," Richie grinned crookedly.

And that was the problem, wasn't it? Eddie did love it. He loved all the weird nicknames Richie would call him, and the way Richie would provoke him, and make jokes about his mom, and pinch his cheeks and call him adorable. Eddie just kind of... was completely in love with Richie Tozier, the straightest boy in existence who bragged about his sexual escapades on the daily, who was currently hovering over Eddie, trying to coax a kiss from him.

"Come on, Eddie Spaghetti, just one smooch," Richie pleaded. "If you're good, maybe I'll slip you some tongue."

Eddie shivered at the thought, which Richie took as disgust rather than intrigue. He pouted as if Eddie had hurt his feelings. "I'm not that gross, am I, Eds?"

"C-come o-o-on, Richie, h-he doesn't ha-have t-to if h-h-he d-doesn't want t-to," Bill said.

Richie turned his head back to observe the Losers, who all were either wide-eyed or smirking knowingly. "Big Bill, I'm sure Eds appreciates you trying to protect his honor, but I've never backed down from a dare, and today will not be the day I break that streak," He said, eyes flashing behind his glasses.

Beverly smiled sweetly and laid her hand on Bill's shoulder, and the boy immediately turned the color of a raspberry. "Bill, the rules say you can't back down from a dare." She fluttered her eyelashes and Bill was effectively sedated.

"I-it is t-the ru-rules..." Bill conceded, staring at the spot where Beverly was touching him.

"Oh, no, that's unfair! You just manipulated him with... with... with your feminine wiles!" Eddie protested, trying the wriggle out from under Richie.

"No, you don't, Eds," Richie said, placing his palms beside Eddie's shoulders, effectively caging him in. He was now on hands and knees above Eddie, his face parallel with Eddie's. Eddie avoided Richie's gaze, instead focusing on the inner skin of Richie's elbow. For some reason, Eddie had the sudden urge to press his lips against it, just to see if it as soft as it looked.

Richie puckered his lips and Eddie immediately noticed the movement, the blood draining from his face. Richie leaned down, aiming his mouth at Eddie's, and Eddie paled even more. He turned his head abruptly, forcing Richie's lips to land on the corner of his jaw. Richie made a soft noise of frustration as he pulled away.

"Oh my god, Eds, can I please kiss you so I don't ruin my perfect record?" Richie asked, dark eyes pleading. "I promise it will be quick and will have minimal transference of germs. I'll even gargle hand sanitizer for you if you want."

"Richie! I don't want you to kiss me!" Eddie said. He felt a blush creep up his cheeks- he was lying. He wanted that more than anything.

"Fine!" Richie sounded hurt, which confused Eddie. "Don't think of it as a kiss then. We hug all the time, this is just a really fast mouth hug."

"Germs!" Eddie said. "You could be riddled with disease!"

"Eds, I brushed my teeth for like, seven minutes!"

"Infection!"

"Oh my god, puh-leaseeeee let me kiss you!" Richie drawled.

"Illnesses!"

"Eddie, baby, it's just a kiss," Richie said. His voice was quieter, softer somehow, like this was just meant for Eddie, not the product of a dare. The thing that surprised Eddie the most though was not the tone or even the utterance of "baby", but the use of his actual name.

Eddie puffed out his cheeks petulantly, thinking of Richie's lips moving against his own. He craved it desperately, but he didn't want it to just be for show.

He'd take what he could get though.

"Ugh... fine," Eddie murmured.

Richie immediately perked up. "Really?"

"Quickly, though!" Eddie said, then added, "And absolutely no tongue!"

Richie chuckled. "That's not what your mom said last night."

"Richie!"

Richie laughed. "Yeah, okay, okay."

And then he was leaning in, and his eyelids were fluttering shut.

And then his lips were pressed against Eddie's.

And Richie was kissing him, and then he was kissing back, and it was

like he was finally seeing life in color. Everything had been black and white before Richie and his technicolor coke-bottle glasses appeared into Eddie's life.

So, when Richie pulled back from the kiss, Eddie followed him, resealing his mouth over Richie's. Richie's eyes shot open in shock, but they quickly shut as he kissed back more fiercely this time.

Eddie decided he'd spent too long caring about germs. He no longer gave a shit.

He drew his tongue across the seal of Richie's lips, and the boy quickly gave him permission to kiss him deeper. Eddie reached up and laced his fingers through Richie's hair, causing the other boy to let out a tiny wanton moan. Richie, like always, wasn't going to give up without a fight, so he fought back, their tongues dancing together in a destructive sort of harmony.

They would have continued kissing too, if it weren't for Stanley's little utterance of, "What the actual fuck,"

Immediately, Richie and Eddie realized what they were doing and began to panic and pull apart. In their hurry, Eddie bit down hard on Richie's tongue, and the other boy cursed as he scrambled back from Eddie.

"Oh, shit, shit, shit," Richie said, his voice thick and lispy without use of his tongue, which he was holding in front of his, trying to inspect the damage.

Bill cleared his throat, a mixture of discomfort and mirth in his expression. "Um... t-that wa-was s-s-something..."

Bev started to giggle uncontrollably, rolling onto the floor and into Ben's lap as she shook from the laughter. Ben stared down at her in awe, cheeks coloring as he traced the lines of Bev's curls against his blue jeans.

"Um..." Eddie couldn't tear his eyes from Richie, though he had turned and slouched, attempting to cover his fierce blush with the brunt of his wild curls.

Luckily, Mike stepped in and saved them from confronting what had just happened by turning to Bill and tentatively asking, "Bill, truth or dare?"

The rest of the evening went rather smoothly, despite the obvious tension. Eddie's face was still a peculiar shade of pink, and Richie had been abnormally quiet, but everyone else tried their best to gloss over the awkwardness.

When the sun started to dip in the sky though, leaking into a sunset like a split egg yolk, they packed up and left the Barrens. As they shuffled out, laughter tinkling around them, Bev held Richie back, tugging him down and whispering in his ear. Richie's expression immediately turned stormy and conflicted, and he muttered, "Fucking evil Molly Ringwald,"

Eddie's eyebrows drew together in concern and he waited for Richie to fall into step with him as they exited the Barrens.

His voice was delicate when he spoke, he didn't really know what to say, "Hey, Richie-"

"I'll walk you home, Eds," Richie cut him off, voice stilted and wiped of emotion.

Eddie bit his lip and nodded, watching as Richie grabbed his bike. Eddie couldn't bike yet, having only one hand not encased in Sharpie-covered bandages, so he walked to the Barrens or rode on the handlebars of Bill's bike. Since Bill and the others were heading in the opposite direction though, he and Eddie walked towards the Kaspbrak house alone.

They didn't talk, the air hung heavy with their unsaid words as they trudged along, the only noise being the squeak of Richie's bike's tire tread and the chilling sound of water being sucked into run-off drains.

They crossed the street whenever they saw a drain up ahead.

When they arrived at the Kaspbrak house, Eddie saw the dim light of the television from the window, his mother's figure illuminated by

the artificial glow. Eddie felt his stomach turn at the sight of her. He knew their relationship would never be the same, she had destroyed that by lying to him and making him feel sickly and delicate all his life. He knew it was twisted, but he did still love her. He didn't think he could ever truly stop loving her, even if he wanted to. She was his mother, no matter what she had done. He hated that she still had that hold over him.

"Thanks for walking me home, Richie," Eddie said, offering Richie a half-hearted smile before turning and starting down the path to his house.

There was a beat before Eddie heard Richie swallow and grab his arm. "Wait, Eddie-"

"What?" Eddie bit out. It came out much harsher than he had intended it to, the dread of entering his house infecting his tone.

Richie swallowed again, and Eddie noticed that he looked almost nervous, at a loss for words. "I um... I want to tell you something,"

"Okay," Eddie nodded. "Go for it."

"You have to promise, okay?" Richie said, insistent. Eddie felt Richie's finger tighten slightly around his wrist. Eddie appreciated the warmth of them, and the inherent Richie-ness. "You have to promise that things aren't gonna be really weird between us because of this."

Eddie frowned in confusion. "Of course. You can tell me anything, Richie."

"Okay, okay," Richie bounced on his heels like he was psyching himself up for something, sending his curls bouncing. Eddie could draw his eyes from the movement, he thought it was absolutely adorable. "I... um..."

"Yes?" Eddie encouraged him.

"I'm in love with you, Eddie," Richie blurted out.

Eddie took a step back, the blood draining from his face. "What?"



"Yeah, I love you. A lot. I mean, I'm sure you already knew that, you're the smart one after all," Richie said. Cautiously, he peered at Eddie from underneath his eyelashes, trying to gauge a reaction from his. "So... um... what do you think about that?"

Eddie balked, then set his mouth in a firm line, fighting back tears. "I think you're cruel, Richie Tozier." He whispered darkly, wrenching his hand from Richie's.

Immediately, hurt flashed over Richie's features. "Jesus, Eds-"

"How could you do this? Is this your idea of a joke?"

"What are you talking about?"

"Honestly, Richie, this is just cruel. You're an asshole. You, Richie Tozier, are the crown prince of assholes!"

Richie reached from Eddie's hand again, but Eddie stumbled away from him, panic building in his chest. "Eds, what are you talking about?"

"I'm not going to apologize, okay?" Eddie said, voice quavering. "I won't. And it fucking sucks that you're being a dick about this, but I promise I'll never... I'll never..."

"Eds, what are you talking about?"

"I won't apologize! I won't!"

"What?"

"I won't apologize for being in love with you!" Eddie shouted, pushing Richie back. Richie froze, turning pale in shock. Eddie pushed on, ignoring Richie's expression. "I won't, I won't, because it won't help. I love you, you absolute fuckface. And I'm sorry if it makes you uncomfortable or whatever, and if you don't want to be friends anymore then that would really suck, but I'd be okay with it, but I'm not going to apologize for loving you. And this is a shitty thing to do, Richie, make fun of me like this-"

Richie took in Eddie's fierce rambling and strode forward, hooking

his finger under Eddie's chin and gently tilting the smaller boy's chin up so Eddie was forced to meet his eyes. Eddie's words died in his throat.

"Eds, I'm not making fun of you," Richie said, his voice quiet and unsteady with emotion.

"W-what?"

"I'm in love with you. For real," Richie leaned down a little so their noses bumped together. Eddie felt his heart skip in his chest. "I'm going... can I kiss you, Eddie?"

Eddie had just barely nodded in consent when Richie rushed forward and pressed his lips against Eddie's. And this was even better than the first one, because they were alone and this kiss wasn't for show- they both knew how the other truly felt, and it made the kiss feel almost magical. Eddie could swear he had never felt as happy, or light as that moment.

Richie swiped his tongue across Eddie's lower lip and Eddie gasped, allowing Richie to deepen the kiss. Eddie decided that Richie tasted like cigarettes and cheap candy- something sweet and bitter and addictive that Eddie never wanted to let go off. Richie adjusted his hands so he was cupping Eddie's jaw, and Eddie's hands fluttered uncertainly until they landed on Richie's bony hips.

They kissed for a moment longer before Richie smiled against Eddie's lips and pulled back, gently resting his head against Eddie's. "Remind me to thank Molly Ringwald," He said.

"Bev? Why?" Eddie asked, tightening the grip of his small fingers on Eddie's hips.

"Well, she dared me to-"

"What?"

"Eds, seriously, relax," Richie said, swiping the pads of his thumbs across Eddie's cheekbones, trying to calm him down. "She dared me to tell you how I felt about you."

Eddie let out a little laugh. "Seriously?"

Richie grinned crookedly and the rim of his glasses bumped up against the bridge of Eddie's nose. "I said that I've never backed out of a dare, and today was certainly not the day I'd break that streak.

"Richie Tozier, you're an idiot."

"See, but now I have proof that you do in fact love my idiocy, which is weird,"

"Yeah, I know, I was surprised too."

"Hey!"

### **Author's Note:**

Yay, Chattré's back from the dead! Oh, she's posting in a completely different fandom instead of continuing her other stories?

Oops.

Hope you liked this, let me know if you did! Or check out my other Reddie fics, they're called Eight More Minutes, Open Doors, What's My Name?, and Not That Kind Of Chemistry.

Kisses,

Chattré

P.S. Totally didn't proofread this. Forgive me.